

*Claims*

1. A stairlift chair including a pair of armrests, each of the said armrests having an upper surface; and a control interface mounted on one of said armrests, said chair being characterized in that said control interface has a palm contacting surface which forms a substantial extension of the upper surface of the armrest to which said interface is attached.  
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2. A stairlift chair as claimed in claim 1 wherein said control interface is pivotable about a substantially vertical axis.
- 10 3. A stairlift chair as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein said control interface is constructed and arranged to avoid point loading on a user's palm when in use.
- 15 4. A stairlift chair as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein said control interface has a substantially planar upper surface and side surfaces aligned substantially perpendicularly to said upper surface.
5. A stairlift chair as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein said one of said armrests has a longitudinal axis, the position of said control interface being adjustable along said longitudinal axis.
- 20 6. A stairlift chair as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein said control interface is angled upwardly out of the plane of said upper surface.
7. A stairlift chair as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein said control interface embodies a power isolation switch.

8. A stairlift chair including two spaced armrests, each armrest having an rear end, a forward end, and a longitudinal axis; and a control interface positioned on or adjacent the forward end of one of said armrests, said chair being characterized in that the position of said control interface is adjustable along said longitudinal axis.
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9. A stairlift chair as claimed in claim 8 wherein each of said armrests comprises a fixed rear part and a forward part which is slidable with respect to said rear part, said control interface being incorporated within said forward part.
- 10 10. A manually engageable control interface for mounting on an armrest of a stairlift chair, said interface being characterized in that it is upwardly angled with respect to said armrest, includes a palm contacting surface constructed and arranged to avoid point loading on a user's palm, when in use and includes side surfaces configured to permit smooth contact by the side of a user's hand.
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11. An interface as claimed in claim 10 wherein said palm contacting surface is constructed and arranged to underlie at least 50% of the area of a user's palm.
12. A manually engageable control interface for a stairlift, said interface including a body member engageable by a user's hand when said stairlift is in use, said interface being characterized in that said body member is formed in two parts which are displaceable with respect to one another such that, in a first configuration of said two parts, said control interface is inactive.
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13. An interface as claimed in claim 12 wherein, when said body parts are in said first configuration, the resulting form of said body differs visually and/or provides a different tactile sensation to the user's hand than when said body parts are in an operative configuration.
- 5        14. A stairlift including the chair and/or control interface as claimed in any one of the preceding claims.
15. A stairlift assembly including:
  - a rail;
  - a carriage mounted for movement along said rail;
  - 10        drive means within said carriage for driving said carriage along said rail;
  - a chair mounted on said carriage ;
  - and at least one hand operated control whereby an occupant of said chair can control the operation of said drive means,
- 15        said stairlift assembly being characterized in that a sensor is provided to sense when a user is occupying said chair, said sensor being further operable to isolate and energise said hand operated control.
16. A stairlift assembly including:
  - a rail;
  - 20        a carriage mounted for movement along said rail;

drive means within said carriage for driving said carriage along said rail;

a chair mounted on said carriage ;

5 at least one hand operated control whereby an occupant of said chair can control the operation of said drive means;

an isolation switch to isolate the power supply to said stair lift,

said stairlift assembly being characterized in that said isolation switch is incorporated into said hand operated control.